

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 181761
ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12 OES-09 /071 R

DRAFTED BY PM/SSP:STHAYER/RES
APPROVED BY PM;RAERICSON
PM/SSP:PPERENYI

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O 182257Z JUL 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PCAT, PARM, UR, US

SUBJECT: CAT: PRESS REACTION AND PRESS GUIDANCE

FOR GELB FROM ERICSON

1. BELOW IS A SAMPLING OF PRESS REACTION FOLLOWING ANNOUNCE-
MENT OF CAT TALKS AS WELL AS REPLIES TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AT
7/17 NOON BRIEFING.

2. TUESDAY WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE COVERED MAIN POINTS OF
GUIDANCE, BUT INCLUDED STATEMENT QUOTE OTHER ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIALS SPOKE HOPEFULLY OF THE RESUMING OF THE ARMS TRANS-
FER MEETING AS ONE OF SEVERAL SMALL SIGNS THAT TENSION IS
EASING SLIGHTLY IN THE WAKE OF LAST WEEK'S ACrimonious
EXCHANGES UNQUOTE.

3. KALB (CBS) RAISED SCHARANSKY ANGLE, NOTED POSSIBILITY OF
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PAGE 02 STATE 181761

QUOTE FLACK UNQUOTE FROM THOSE URGING RETALIATION AGAINST
SOVIETS, AND SAID QUOTE INFORMED SOURCE UNQUOTE HAD CONCEDED
THAT A HIGH-LEVEL REVIEW OF WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH TALKS
AT THIS TIME HAD LED TO LAST MINUTE QUOTE YES UNQUOTE BE-
CAUSE ARMS CONTROL WAS INVOLVED.

4. VALERIANI (NBC) POINTED OUT THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS ARE

AMERICAN INITIATIVE AND, IF CANCELLED, QUOTE THERE MIGHT BE
A LOT OF TIME BEFORE THE RUSSIANS AGREED TO A RESUMPTION .
. UNQUOTE

5. UPI DISPATCH FROM HELSINKI QUOTED MENDELEVICH AS SAYING
QUOTE WE HAVE RESUMED DISCUSSIONS AND THE MEETING HAS
BEEN CONDUCTED IN A GOOD SPIRIT. WE BOTH EXPECT SUCCESSFUL
PROGRESS IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. UNQUOTE GELB QUOTED
AS SAYING HELSINKI IS A NICE LOCATION FOR OUR TALKS WHICH
WE EXPECT TO TAKE UNTIL THE END OF NEXT WEEK.

6. DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE POSTED FOLLOWING REPLY TO QUES-
TION FROM YESTERDAY'S BRIEFING: QUESTION - ARE THE CONVEN-
TIONAL ARMS TRANSFER TALKS MOVING AHEAD ON THEIR OWN MOMEN-
TUM OR WAS THERE A SPECIFIC REVIEW OF THEM JUST PRIOR TO
ANNOUNCEMENT. ANSWER - THE TALKS DO HAVE A CERTAIN MOMEN-
TUM, IN THE SENSE THAT THEIR CONTINUATION IS IN THE
INTEREST OF BOTH SIDES. CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO THE
APPROPRIATENESS OF CONTINUING THE TALKS AT THIS TIME. THE
DECISION TO DO SO WAS BASED ON AN ASSESSMENT THAT THE TALKS
SERVE OUR NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS.

7. IF SPOKESMAN IS REMINDED ABOUT TAKEN QUESTION RE
PRESIDENTIAL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION TO CONTINUE TALKS, HE
WILL CONFIRM THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN BY THE PRESIDENT.
IF AGAIN ASKED WHETHER DECISION TO CONTINUE WAS PART OF
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PAGE 03 STATE 181761

BROAD REVIEW OF US-SOVIET COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND NEGO-
TIATIONS HE WILL SAY HE WAS UNABLE TO OBTAIN ANSWER AS HE
IMPLIED MIGHT BE THE CASE WHEN QUESTION WAS TAKEN.

CHRISTOPHER

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